



DPSCS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING DIVISION CAREER BRIEF #9

Workplace Wellness

Staying healthy at work doesn't just mean being one of the lucky people who doesn't get the flu this year. There are a number of factors that can play a significant role in your health and well-being. When you are at a worksite eight or more hours a day you have to contend with stress and germs. Stress can take a huge toll on your body both emotionally and physically, which can lead to illness. So what are some things you can do at work to remain healthy?

■ Find a Balance

On the job stress can drastically affect your health. It is important to have a balance between your professional and personal lives. For many that means working out or playing on a sports team. For others it's a favorite hobby that relaxes them after a difficult day. Having an activity that allows you to unwind after a stressful day actually makes you more prepared to handle stress in the future.

■ Eat Healthy at Work

Eating healthy at work can prove to be a great challenge for many of us. Between the vending machines, food left over from meetings, colleagues bringing in donuts, and the various fast food restaurants in the area, it can be extremely difficult to watch what you eat. Instead of giving in to the temptations pack yourself some healthy alternatives. Foods like yogurt, fruit, nuts, granola, etc. are a perfect snack for the workplace.

It is important to drink water all day long. Most people would prefer coffee or soda to water; however, water keeps you hydrated which in turn keeps you healthy. Add one package of True Lemon Crystallized Lemon to your bottled water to give it the taste of fresh squeezed lemon juice (without any of the mess). One package contains 0 calories, 0 carbohydrates, no sweeteners, and 25% of your vitamin C requirement for the day, which we all need more of during cold and flu season!

■ Workplace Atmosphere

Adding personal style or comfort to your work area can help you relax at work.

- Add some pictures of family and friends to your desk area.
- Instead of listening to the hum of the lights, or the central air, bring in a radio or your favorite CD to listen to during the day.
- Others may find the smell of fresh flowers or an air freshener soothing throughout the day.

■ **Ergonomics and Activity**

Many of us spend a great deal of time hunched over our desks, which can cause back problems, tight shoulders, carpal tunnel syndrome, headaches, etc. The right office equipment might be able to alleviate some of these problems. You may want to look into the following:

- Alternative Keyboards and Mice
- Document Stands
- Glare Screens
- Wrist Rests

Get up and move! Use the following activities to prevent yourself from becoming stiff and sore throughout the day.

- Instead of sitting at your desk for hours on end, walk or stretch once an hour.
- Walk around the building during your lunch break, take the stairs instead of the elevator, print to the printer on the other side of the office, etc.
- For those of you who sit at a computer all day it is important to stretch your arms and wrists.

■ **Create a Positive Work Environment**

Think of little ways to improve workplace morale.

- At lunch make it a point not to talk about work issues/problems. Get to know your coworkers for who they are, not what they do.
- When your coworkers have a “case of the Mondays”, suggest going out to lunch to break up the day.
- Organize birthday clubs to celebrate your coworkers’ birthdays.
- Thanking a colleague for help, offering praise for a job well done, etc. can help boost office morale. By making a conscious effort to thank your coworkers you will be promoting a positive work environment.

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

~World Health Organization, 1948~

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